

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 COLOMB 03633 01 OF 02 141309Z

66

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 EA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

OFA-01 CAB-02 FAA-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00 DLOS-04

CU-02 FEA-01 /124 W

----- 009791

R 141230Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3741

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USUN NEW YORK 420

CINCPAC

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COLOMBO 3633

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ECON, MV

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S VISIT TO MALDIVES, OCT 30 - NOV 2, 1975

REF: COLOMBO 3197 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: AMB AND PARTY OF FOUR MADE TRIP
TO MALDIVES OCT 30 TO NOV 2 ABOARD US NAVY
CRUISER USS WORDEN. MALDIVIAN MOON FLAG AND MOON ROCK
WERE PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT NASIR AND COLLECTION OF
USIS BOOKS WAS DONATED TO ISLAND LIBRARY. PRESIDENT,
WHO APPEARS TO BE IN FULL CONTROL, WAS CONCERNED OVER
REPERCUSSIONS OF BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM RAF'S FACILITY
ON GAN ISLAND. HE EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENTS INTENTION
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 COLOMB 03633 01 OF 02 141309Z

TO FOLLOW NON-ALIGNED POLICY INTERNATIONALLY. POOR
FISHING CATCH, MALDIVES' BASIC INDUSTRY, AND FOOD

SCARCITY OVER PAST TWO YEARS HAVE CREATED SERIOUS
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. GOM IS CONTINUING EFFORTS TO
UPGRADE ITS FISHING INDUSTRY WHILE PURSUING WAYS TO
DIVERSIFY ECONOMY. PRIORITIES ARE EXPANDING SHIPPING
OPERATIONS, TOURISM, OIL EXPLORATION AND FOREIGN
INVESTMENT. US OFFERS TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND
TRAINING OF MALDIVIAN STUDENTS AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WAS DISCUSSED AS WAS DISRUPTION OF US-FUNDED
PROGRAM CREATED BY PRESENT UNSETTLED SITUATION IN
LEBANON. AMB EXPLAINED DIFFICULTY USG WOULD
HAVE IN RESPONDING TO MALDIVIAN REQUEST FOR GIFT OF
CIVILIAN JET AIRCRAFT (NOW RAISED TO TWO) WHICH WE RECEIVED
JUST BEFORE LEAVING FOR MALE. MALDIVIANS PRESENCE
AT UNGA THIS YEAR MAY BE START OF MORE REGULAR
ATTENDANCE AND MALDIVIAN VOTE MAY BE USEFUL TO US AS
DEMONSTRATED BY THEIR FAVORABLE VOTE ON KOREAN
QUESTION. IMPRESSION GAINED IS THAT ALTHOUGH
MALDIVIAN GOVT WILL CONTINUE TO RELY PRIMARILY
ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, PARTICULARLY WITH SOUTH
ASIAN NEIGHBORS, IT WILL ALSO MAKE GREATER EFFORT TO
OBTAIN GRANT ASSISTANCE FROM MULTILATERAL
ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLOSER
RELATIONS WITH UN BODIES. END SUMMARY.

2. INTRODUCTION: AMB AND MRS VAN HOLLEN,
ACCOMPANIED BY DEFENSE ATTACHE AND MRS CUTCHEN
AND FIRST SECRETARY KAY JOURNEYED TO MALDIVES
OCT 30 - NOV 2. MAJOR SUPPORT WAS
PROVIDED BY US NAVY IN FORM OF USS WORDEN WHICH
TRANSPORTED PARTY TO AND FROM MALDIVES AND PROVIDED
EXCELLENT LUNCH IN OFFICERS WARD ROOM WHICH
AMB HOSTED FOR HIGH-RANKING MALDIVIAN OFFI-
CIALS. VISIT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT MOON
ROCK AND MALDIVIAN MOON FLAG TO PRESIDENT NASIR
WHICH AMB WAS UNABLE TO DO DURING JULY 1974
VISIT DUE TO PRESIDENT BEING DOWN WITH FLU,
(COLOMBO 2000, JULY 14, 1974). IN ADDITION TO TALK
WITH PRESIDENT, CALLS ON TWO VICE PRESIDENTS AND
MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, UNDER SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 COLOMB 03633 01 OF 02 141309Z

RELATIONS AND LUNCHEON ABOARD USS WORDEN
PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY TO REINFORCE PERSONAL

RELATIONSHIPS WITH HIGH MALDIVIAN OFFICIALS.
AMB ALSO PRESENTED COLLECTION OF BOOKS
PROVIDED BY USIS TO ISLAND LIBRARY, RECENTLY ESTAB-
LISHED LENDING LIBRARY. OVERALL IMPRESSION WAS THAT
MALDIVIANS ARE CONTINUING TO PURSUE VIGOROUSLY THEIR
SELF-HELP EFFORTS AND DEVELOP LAID RESOURCES
AVAILABLE. HOWEVER, WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT MALDIVIANS

HAVE BEEN PASSING THROUGH DIFFICULT PERIOD
ECONOMICALLY OVER PAST TWO YEARS. GOM'S LIMITED
RESOURCES WERE SQUEEZED BY SHARP INCREASED
IN WORLD MARKET PRICES, PARTICULARLY OF FOODSTUFFS,
AND VERY BAD FISH CATCH, WHICH IS STILL BACKBONE OF
ECONOMY.

3. TALK WITH PRESIDENT NASIR: AMB PRESENTED
MOON ROCK AND MALDIVIAN MOON FLAG FLAG DURING MEETING
WITH PRESIDENT NASIR. PRESIDENT WAS FRIENDLY AND

CORDIAL BUT IS FAR CRY FROM MUCH MORE EBULLIENT
EX-PRIME MINISTER AHMED ZAKI. NASIR, WHO SPEAKS
THROUGH INTERPRETER, WAS MUCH MORE TACITURN AND
TENDED TO RESPOND RATHER THAN TO INITIATE CONVERSATION.
AMB EXTENDED PRESIDENT FORD'S GREETINGS TO
PRESIDENT NASIR WHO RECIPROCATED ASKING THAT HIS BEST
WISHES BE SENT TO PRESIDENT FORD. NASIR INDICATED
THAT HIS GOVT PLANNED TO FOLLOW NON-ALIGNED
POLICY AND WOULD ONLY TAKE ON INTERNATIONAL
COMMITMENTS WHICH WERE IN KEEPING WITH DIRECT
INTERESTS OF MALDIVIES. HE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT GOM
HAD NOT PROCEEDED WITH PLANS TO ESTABLISH CONSULAR
OFFICE IN BOMBAY NOR WERE THERE PLANS TO ESTABLISH
DIPLOMATIC OFFICES ELSEWHERE. MATTER OF CONSIDERABLE
CONCERN TO GOM IS PROBLEM OF ADJUSTMENT OF ATOLL
INHABITANTS TO DEPARTURE OF RAF FROM GAN ISLAND
IN ADDU ATOLL. PRESIDENT ALSO STRESSED POOR FISHING
CATCH HAD CREATED FAIRLY SEVERE PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY
IN OBTAINING FOODSTUFFS FOR POPULACE. PRESIDENT
NASIR APPEARED TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH AND SUBJECT OF EX-
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 COLOMB 03633 01 OF 02 141309Z

PRIME MINISTER ZAKI'S OUSTER DID NOT COME UP.

4. TALKS WITH TWO VICE PRESIDENTS: LIVELY
DISCUSSION WITH VICE PRESIDENT IN CHARGE OF FISHERIES,
AHMED HILMY, ELICITED MORE DETAILS ON FISHING INDUSTRY.
HE EXPLAINED THAT FISHING CATCH OVER PAST TWO YEARS
HAD BEEN EXTREMELY BAD ALTHOUGH RECENTLY CATCH WAS
IMPROVING. VICE PRESIDENT WAS TRYING TO UPGRADE
INDUSTRY IN THREE WAYS: A) GOM HAD ENTERED INTO
AGREEMENTS WITH ADDITIONAL JAPANESE FIRM AS WELL AS
THAI FIRM TO BUY FRESH FISH FROM MALDIVIANS.
IMPLICATION WAS THAT THIS HAD INCREASED PRICE PAID
FOR CATCH; B) GOM WAS MOTORIZING 23 FISHING VESSELS
WITH JAPANESE ENGINES TO EXTEND RANGE OF FISHING
OPERATIONS; AND C) WITH INDIAN ASSISTANCE, GOM IS
GOING AHEAD WITH PLANS TO BUILD TWO COLD STORAGE AND
ONE FISH CANNING FACTORY IN LAVIYANI (GEOGRAPHIC
NAME: FADIFFOLU) ATOLL. PROBLEM VICE PRESIDENT

HILMY NOW FORESEES IS ENCOURAGING MALDIVIAN FISHERMAN TO INCREASE CATCH RATHER THAN FINDING MARKETS WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN PROBLEM TWO YEARS AGO WHEN SRI LANKA CUT BACK IMPORTS OF MALDIVE FISH.

5. FRANK AND FRIENDLY TALK WITH VICE VICE PRESIDENT (FINANCE) ABDUL SATTAR CONFIRMED THAT MALDIVIANS ARE PROBABLY ONLY DEVELOPING COUNTRY THAT HAS NO FOREIGN DEBT. GOM CONTINUES POLICY OF BORROWING NOT ONE LARI (MALDIVIAN CENT) FROM ABROAD. SATTAR ALSO NOTED THAT DROP IN FISHING CATCH AND INABILITY TO OBTAIN BURMESE RICE HAD PLAYED HAVOC WITH TREASURY AND APPARENTLY LED TO SOME SEVERE MALNUTRITION AMONG MALDIVIAN PEOPLE. FORTUNATELY, OFFER OF RICE FROM PAKISTAN AND USE OF PROFITS FROM HIGHLY LUCRATIVE MALDIVIAN SHIPPING LINE HELPED TO OVERCOME PROBLEM. SHIPPING OPERATIONS CONTINUE TO EXPAND. ACCORDING TO SATTAR, PROFITS ARE PLOWED BACK INTO PURCHASE OF MORE AND NEWER SHIPS. AS RESULT, MERCHANT SHIPPING FLEET NOW NUMBERS 53, UP FROM 46 AT TIME OF AMBS JULY 1974 VISIT. VICE PRESIDENT SATTAR CLAIMED THAT VICE PRESIDENT ALI MANIKU, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF SHIPPING AND COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 COLOMB 03633 01 OF 02 141309Z

OPERATIONS, WAS AWAY ON ANOTHER SHIP-BUYING TRIP. ACCORDING TO SATTAR, MANIKU HAD BEEN PURCHASING SHIPS AT RATE OF APPROX ONE EVERY TWO MONTHS. SHIPS

ARE MANNED UP TO SENIOR OFFICER LEVEL BY MALDIVIAN NATIONALS WHO ARE WILLING TO WORK FOR LOW WAGES AS CONDITIONS ABOARD SHIPS ARE BETTER THAN THOSE ENJOYED BY MOST MALDIVIANS. HRHUS, ACCORDING TO SATTAR, SHIPPING LINE IS DOING WELL. OTHER PILLAR OF ECONOMY, TOURIST INDUSTRY DID NOT APPEAR TO BE DOING QUITE SO WELL. ALTHOUGH TOURISTS WERE ALREADY PRESENT, SATTAR INDICATED THERE HAD BEEN SOME CANCELLATIONS BY TOUR GROUPS AND THAT TWO NEW GOVT-OWNED TOURIST ISLANDS WERE NOT BEING PATRONIZED WHICH HE ATTRIBUTED TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF THEM BY TOUR OPERATORS. IN SPITE OF THIS, HE INDICATED TOURISM IS MONEY-EARNER BUT FUTHER EXPANSION MAY BE SLOWED DOWN. OVERALL PICTURE THAT EMERGED IS THAT MALDIVIAN ECONOMY IS STILL HIGHLY DEPENDENT ON FISHING BUT THAT SHIPPING OPERATIONS WERE ABLE TO BAIL OUT GOM BY PROVIDING FUNDS TO PURCHASE FOOD FOR POPULACE. SATTAR ALSO SPOKE WITH SOMEHEAT ON SUBJECT OF WHICH COUNTRIES HAD RECEIVED MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED (MSA) APPELLATION. HE OBVIOUSLY FELT MALDIVES RICHLY DESRVED MSA RATING AHT RELIEF BUT OPINED THAT "INFLUENCE" PROBABLY HAD MORE TO DO WITH A COUNTRYS RECEIVING MSA

TITLE THAN OBJECTIVE FACTS. TO GOM, ALL DONATIONS
ARE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED BUT NO-LOANS POLICY STANDS
FIRM.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 COLOMB 03633 02 OF 02 141601Z

45

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 EA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

OFA-01 CAB-02 FAA-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00 DLOS-04

CU-02 FEAE-00 /123 W

----- 012221

R 141230Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3742

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USUN NEW YORK 421

CINCPAC

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 COLOMBO 3633

6. OTHER CALLS: MEETING WITH MINISTER OF TRANSPORT,
HASSAN ZARZHR, CENTERED ON GOM'S REQUEST FOR TRAINING
OF STUDENT AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT (AUB)
FOR JOB AS CIVIL AVIATIONADMINISTRATOR. EXPLAINING
THAT SECURITY SITUATION IN LEBANON WOULD HOLD ANY

PLANS IN ABEYANCE UNTIL SITUATION WAS STABILIZED, AMB
ASKED THAT MINISTER NONETHELSS INDICATE IN WRITING
WHETHER HE WAS STILLINTERESTED IN OFFER OF TRAINING

WHICH AMB HAD DISCUSSED IN LETTER LAST MARCH.
IF SO, MINISTER WAS ALSO ASKED TO NAME
CANDIDATE. IN THIS WAY, PROCESSING OF APPLICATION
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 COLOMB 03633 02 OF 02 141601Z

FOR ADMISSION, WHICH TAKES SEVERAL MONTHS, COULD GO
AHEAD SO THAT CANDIDATE COULD ATTEND AUB AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE AFTER SITUATION RETURNS TO NORMAL.

7. THERE WAS ALSO SOMEHAT EXTENDED DISCUSSION WITH
DEPT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DEA) UNDER SECRETARY
AHMED JAMEEL. AMB HAD MET JAMEEL IN NEW YORK
WHEN HE LED MALDIVIAN UN DELEGATION TO 1972 UNGA.
HE WAS ALERT AND SEEMED QUITE KNOWLEDGEABLE
ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. DEA HAD HAD BUSY MONTH
WITH SEVENTEEN FOREIGN VISITORS IN THREE WEEK
PERIOD INCLUDING UN AND OTHER FOREIGN TECHNICIANS
AND DIPLOMATS FROM BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA, INDIAN
PAKISTAN, USSR, YUGOSLAVIA AND CZECHOSLAVAKIA, LATTER TWO TO
PRESENT CREDENTIALS. THIS BRINGS TO TWENTY-FOUR,
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES HAVING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH
GOM AND JAMEEL SAID HE EXPECTED MEXICO TO ESTABLISH
RELATIONS SHORTLY. (RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL WERE SEVERED
LAST SPRING UNDER ARAB PRESSURE.)

8. ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, AMB ACKNOWLEDGED
THAT WE HAD RECEIVED NOTE FROM GOM JUST PRIOR TO
LEAVING COLOMBO IN WHICH MALDIVIANS REQUESTED GIFT
FOR AIR MALDIVES OF FOKKER FELLOWSHIP OR YAK 40
JET AIRCRAFT. WHILE NOTING WE HAD NOT HAD TIME TO
LOOK INTO REQUEST CLOSELY, AMB POINTED OUT THAT
OUR LEGISLATIVE RESTRAINTS CONTINUE TO MAKE PROVISION
OF GRANT ASSISTANCE OF THIS NATURE VERY DIFFICULT.
HE ALSO REMARKED THAT NEITHER FOKKER NOR YAK 40 ARE
AMERICAN AIRCRAFT. JAMEEL QUICKLY ASSURED HIM THESE
TYPES WERE FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND SIMILAR
AIRCRAFT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. GOM WAS THINKING OF
USING SUCH AIRCRAFTS FOR FLIGHTS BETWEEN AMLE AND
TRIVANDRUM IF AIR LINKS BETWEEN MALDIVES AND INDIA
WERE ESTABLISHED. QUESTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS FOR
MALDIVIAN STUDENTS WAS THEN DISCUSSED. THREE
STUDENTS ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN AUB (ALTHOUGH
STAYING IN MALDIVES UNTIL UNIVERSITY OPENS AGAIN). OF TWO
MALDIVIANS WHO HAVE COMPLETED TRAINING AT AUB, ONE
IS WORKING AS SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER IN MALE.
OTHER HAS MARRIED SWAISH GIRL AND IS LIVING IN
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 COLOMB 03633 02 OF 02 141601Z

COLOMBO REPORTEDLY HAVING "DROPPED OUT." AMB DESCRIBED OUR OFFER OF SCHOLARSHIP FOR CIVIL AVIATION TRAINEE AS WELL AS WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES FOR ATTENDANCE AT AUB, PROVIDING SECURITY SITUATION WILL PERMIT EARLY REOPENING OF UNIVERSITY. UNDER SECRETARY OF EDUCATION DEPT ALSO DISCUSSED WITH US GOM'S PLAN TO EXTEND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TO THE ADVANCED LEVEL NEXT YEAR. HE REPEATED REQUEST FOR US HELP IN IMPLEMENTING THIS PROGRAM (SEE PARA 16, COLOMBO 2000, JULY 17, 1974).

10. ON QUESTION OF BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM RAF CAN, JAMEEL SAID THAT AT PRESENT THERE IS NO PLAN TO ALLOW OTHER FOREIGN MILITARY TO USE FACILITIES. HE SAID POSSIBILITY OF SOME FOREIGN ORGANIZATION RUNNING AIRPORT ON COMMERCIAL BASIS HAD BEEN EXPLORED BUT THAT THIS DOES NOT APPEAR FEASIBLE DUE TO DISTANCE OF GAN ISLAND FROM TRAVELLED AIR ROUTES. ALSO, IDEA OF FOREIGN CHARTER FLIGHTS BRINGING TOURISTS TO MALDIVES VIA GAN AND THEN TRANSFERRING TO AIR MALDIVES TO REACH NORTHERN TOURIST ISLANDS SEEMS NON-STARTER AS FREQUENCY OF FLIGHTS WOULD NOT JUSTIFY COST OF MAINTAINING AIRPORT AT GAN.

11. JAMEEL EXPLAINED THAT NEW DEPT OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT HAD BEEN SET UP, AS PART OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, IN EFFORT TO DEVELOP AND DIVERSIFY ECONOMY THROUGH OIL EXPLORATION AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT. THUS SHIPPING, TOURISM, OIL AND ATTRACTION OF FOREIGN CAPITAL HAVE BECOME GOM'S TOP PRIORITIES IN ECONOMIC FIELD. FOREIGN INVESTMENT DEPT HAD ISSUED ADVERTISEMENT (COPY BEING POUCHED) SETTING FORTH INDUCEMENTS TO FOREIGN INVESTORS. JAMEEL INDICATED SEVERAL BUSINESSMEN HAD RESPONDED BUT THAT NO DEALS HAD BEEN CONSUMMATED SO FAR. AMB TOLD JAMEEL WE WOULD BRING ADVERTISEMENT TO ATTENTION TO APPROPRIATE USG AGENCIES FOR DISSEMINATION TO AMERICAN FIRMS WHO MIGHT HAVE INTEREST IN GOM'S OFFER.

12. REGARDING DECISION TO SEND GOM DELEGATION TO UNGA FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 1972, JAMEEL DESCRIBED IT
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 COLOMB 03633 02 OF 02 141601Z

AS TRIAL BALLOON AGAIN TO TEST USEFULNESS OF UN TO MALDIVIANS. ANOTHER DEA OFFICIAL INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO SEND MALDIVIAN DELEGATION TO UNGA HENCEFORWARD ON REGULAR BASIS. IF SO, MALDIVIAN VOTE AT UN IS OF INTEREST TO US AS DEMONSTRATED BY GOM'S RECENT FAVORABLE VOTE ON KOREAN ISSUE. AT SAME TIME, UNFAVORABLE VOTE ON ANTI-ZIONISM RESOLUTION SEEMS RESULT OF ARAB PRESSURE,

AS WAS EARLIER DECISION TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL (REFTTEL). TREND OF GOM'S DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY SUGGESTS CHANGE MAY BE UNDERWAY FROM EFFORTS TO RELY ON BILATERAL RELATIONS OF DIRECT ECONOMIC INTEREST TO GOM, I.E. RELATIONS WITH INDIA, PAKISTAN, SRI LANKA, ETC., TO BROADEN ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN MORE ASSISTANCE FROM UN AND OTHER MULTILATERAL AGENCIES. IN ADDITION TO UNGA DELEGATION, JAMEEL WAS LEAVING SHORTLY AFTER AMB'S VISIT TO ATTEND FAO MEETING IN ROME. AS FAR AS EMBASSY IS AWARE, THIS IS FIRST INTERNATIONAL MEETING WHICH GOM HAS ATTENDED.

13. GOM IS ALSO IN MIDST OF RECLAIMING IN MALE FAIRLY LARGE TRACTS OF LAND FROM SEA. WITH POPULATION OF 14,000 AND FLOATING POPULATION OF 3,000 AT ANY ONE TIME, SPACE IS AT PREMIUM IN THIS ONE-SQUARE MILE CAPITAL. AMB MENTIONED THAT USG HAD AGREED TO DONATE COMMODITIES AT VALUE OF APPROX 370,00 DOLLARS TO WORLD FOOD PROGRAM IN SUPPORT OF THESE RECLAMATION EFFORTS. JAMEEL INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS UNDP PROJECT HAD NOT YET GOTTEN UNDERWAY. REGARDING INTER-ATOLL RADIO NET EQUIPMENT WHICH AMB HAD PRESENTED DURING 1974 VISIT, WE WERE TOLD THAT IT HAD BEEN SET UP IN NORTHERN ATOLLS AND THAT WIND GENERATORS WERE WORKING EFFECTIVELY.

14. OVERALL ASSESSMENT: AT LUNCHEON ABOARD USS WORDEN PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FROM MALE, WHICH INCLUDED TWO VICE PRESIDENTS AND THREE MINISTERS, MAIN THEMES OF MALDIVIAN CONCERN CAME THROUGH QUITE CLEARLY. MALDIVIANS HAVE BEEN THROUGH VERY TOUCH PERIOD ECONOMICALLY BUT SEEMED DETERMINED TO FORGE AHEAD RELYING MAINLY ON OWN LIMITED RESOURCES. BAD TIMES
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 COLOMB 03633 02 OF 02 141601Z

DEMONSTRATED DEGREE TO WHICH ECONOMY OF THIS TINY NATION IS STILL DEPENDENT ON FISHING INDUSTRY. THEY ARE PRAGMATIC, TOUGH-MINDED AND SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE. HOWEVER, THEY ALSO EXPRESSED FEELING THAT IN LIGHT OF THEIR STRAIGHTENED CIRCUMSTANCES, THEY WERE SOMEHOW NOT GETTING THEIR SHARE OF FINANCIAL RELIEF BEING DOLED OUT IN WORLD BECAUSE OF DISLOCATION OF WORLD ECONOMY. CHANGE IN GOVT LAST SPRING WHEN EX-PRIME MINISTER ZAKI WAS OUSTED, APPEARS TO HAVE AROUSED NO OVERT DOMESTIC OPPOSITION AND ENHANCES PRESIDENT NASIR'S PREDOMINANT POSITION WHICH APPARENTLY IS UNCHALLENGED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON LIMITED OBSERVATIONS AND INFO AND BY COMPARING NOTES WITH COLOMBO-BASED DIPLOMATS WHO ARE ALSO ACCREDITED TO MALDIVES. ONE

CANNOT HELP FEELING THESE UNDERCURRENTS OF
REPRESSION AND FEAR WHICH SEEM TO BE PART OF THIS
TIGHTLY-CONTROLLED SOCIETY. BRITISH WITHDRAWAL
FROM GAN RAISES QUESTIONS AS TO WHETHER MOVE WILL
HAVE ADVERSE EFFECT ON ECONOMY AND CREATE POTENTIAL
FOR DISSATISFACTION AMONG ADDU ATOLL INHABITANTS, COND-

ITIONS WHICH ARE BOTHERING GOM. BECAUSE THE INHABI-
TANTS OF THIS NATION OF SOME 130,000 PEOPLE ARE TO
SACRIFICE AND WORK HARD, HOWEVER, ONE LEAVES WITH
IMPRESSION THAT MALDIVIANS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN MAKING
MOST OF WHATEVER IS AVAILABLE TO THEM.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS ON FUTURE US POLICY AND ACTIONS
WILL BE SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL.
VAN HOLLEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, POLICIES, AMBASSADORS, VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975COLOMB03633
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P750179-0610
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751143/aaaabmat.tel
Line Count: 455
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 9
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 COLOMBO 3197
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <09 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR'S VISIT TO MALDIVES, OCT 30 - NOV 2, 1975
TAGS: PFOR, ECON, US, MV, XX, (VAN HOLLEN, CHRISTOPHER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006